

**Letter to Congressional Leaders
Transmitting a Report on Military
and Civilian Personnel in Colombia
Supporting Plan Colombia**

November 6, 2002

Dear Mr. Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

Pursuant to section 3204(f), title III, chapter 2 of the Emergency Supplemental Act, 2000 (the "Act"), as enacted in the Military Construction Appropriations Act, 2001, Public Law 106-246, I am providing a report prepared by my Administration. The report provides "the aggregate number, locations, activities, and lengths of assignment for all temporary and permanent U.S. military personnel and U.S. individual civilians retained as contractors involved in the antinarcotics campaign in Colombia."

In so doing, I note and appreciate the continued strong bipartisan support given to U.S. programs assisting Colombia in the Act and elsewhere.

This report is classified because of force protection considerations and the high level of terrorist threat in Colombia. However, the aggregate numbers given below are unclassified.

The report indicates that as of September 13, 2002, the end of this reporting period, there were 138 temporary and permanent U.S. military personnel and 250 U.S. civilians retained as individual contractors in Colombia involved in supporting Plan Colombia. This report further indicates that during July, August, and September 2002, these figures never exceeded the ceilings established in section 3204(b) of the Act, as amended.

Sincerely,

George W. Bush

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Richard B. Cheney, President of the Senate. This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on November 7.

The President's News Conference

November 7, 2002

The President. Thank you. Good afternoon. Thanks for coming. This is an impor-

tant week for our country and for the world. The United Nations will vote tomorrow on a resolution bringing the civilized world together to disarm Saddam Hussein. Here at home, our citizens have voted in an election that I believe will strengthen our ability to make progress for all the American people.

I congratulate the men and women, Republicans and Democrats, who were elected this week to public office all across America. I appreciate their willingness to leave their private lives and to serve their communities and to serve our Nation.

I also commend the millions of voters across America and across the political spectrum who went to the polls. At a time when our freedoms are under attack, it is more important than ever that our citizens exercise the rights and responsibilities of our democracy.

Now that the voters have spoken, I urge the members of both political parties to come together to get things done for the American people. I've talked to leaders of both parties and assured them I want to work with them. I talked to Senator Daschle yesterday and said that, although the Republican Party now leads the Senate, I still want to work with him to get things done for the American people. I talked to Leader Gephardt as well.

I look forward to working with Members of the Congress and the newly elected Governors to make America's families safer in their homes and their communities, to make our economy stronger so people can find work, to make our country a better and more compassionate place. Members of the new Congress will take office in January, and they'll have a full agenda. The current Congress, however, will return in just a few days to take up some unfinished business.

We have a responsibility to protect the American people against threats from any source. I'm grateful to the Members of the Congress, both Republicans and Democrats, that came together to support the war against terror and authorize, if need be, the use of force to disarm Iraq. We must bring the same spirit of bipartisan cooperation to the urgent task of protecting our country from the ongoing threat of terrorist attack.

The single most important item of unfinished business on Capitol Hill is to create